RE: **USAID STIP APS CDR Addendum 7200AA18APS00003-ADDENDUM-ALP for Accelerating Local Potential**

Amendment: **01 - Questions & Answers from Q&A Period: March 5 - March 15, 2018 (5:00PM EDT) and Clarification Amendment**

Issue Date: **Friday, March 23, 2018**

UMBRELLA - https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=301213
ADDENDUM - https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=301233

Clarification Statement between STIP APS and ALP Addendum:
Applicants are reminded that the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum is just the first in a series of funding opportunities expected to arise under the umbrella STIP APS mechanism, which is open for a full calendar year. Please continue to monitor grants.gov for new opportunities, which USAID expects will be periodically announced in the form of Addenda to the STIP APS.

AMENDMENT #01

TECHNICAL AND CLARIFYING QUESTIONS:

1. What is the anticipated duration of projects funded under this program?

USAID Response: *As noted on page 6 of the Addendum, "contingent on the availability of funding, USAID/LAB anticipates supporting up to six new Cooperative Agreements of approximately $0.5-$1 million total for each partnership, spent over two to three years".*

2. None of the links in this email message work properly. I have not been able to connect to any of the associated pages. Kindly correct the problem so I can access the information.

USAID Response: *We apologize for the inconvenience; both links can be found below:*
STIP APS umbrella mechanism: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=301213
Accelerating Local Potential Addendum to the STIP APS: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=301233

3. Please send us information on this funding opportunity. Thanks so much for your help.

USAID Response: *Please note that there is no funding associated with the STIP APS Umbrella. The funding opportunity is housed under the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum to the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships in Higher Education Program Annual Program Statement. For more information on this funding opportunity, please go to the "Related Documents" tab of this funding announcement.*

4. Please let me know if research on "STI capacity building for rural manufacturing" is a topic that fits this STIP-APS grant call. The research proposed, feeds into the SDG of decent work and incomes for youth in India. And the outcome is sustainable institutional (HEI & R&D organizations), community and individual STI capacities for rural manufacturing.

USAID Response: *As described in the published Addendum, this funding opportunity aims to "capitalize on the expertise, ingenuity, and passion of the global research community to accelerate institutional capacity for science, technology, and innovation within higher education institutions (HEIs) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) that have a USAID presence." Provided the proposed scope of work meets this overarching objective, as assessed by the specific evaluation criteria detailed within the announcement, the U.S. Global Development Lab does not restrict applications to the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum based on sector or geographical focus. USAID cannot respond to specific ideas or concepts prior to receipt of an official Concept Note submitted through the designated intake portal.*

5. Please clarify whether a private partner is required and if the private partner must contribute to the funding.

USAID Response: *Consistent with the requirements of the umbrella STIP APS (page 15), Applicants to the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum are expected to propose appropriate and effective collaborations with partners beyond the higher education community; however, engagement with the private sector specifically is not required. Where appropriate, financial support from proposed partners will be viewed favorably, but is not a requirement.*

6. My name is XXXX and I work at non-profit XXXX. We are building a network and training program with collaborators worldwide.

I am reaching out to inquire about our eligibility for the *Accelerating Local Potential: Addendum published under the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (STIP) Annual Program Statement (APS)* application call.

USAID Response: *Under the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum to the STIP APS funding opportunity, as noted on page 3 - "Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC) with an affiliated USAID Mission; either institution may serve as the Prime awardee."*

Consortia applications that include non-HEI organizations are allowed and encouraged, however, only HEIs are eligible to a serve as the Prime for this award".

7. The addendum states "Because USAID seeks to increase the capacity of part or all of the LMIC HEI, while leveraging an all-of-university approach from the US-based HEI, *all HEIs are restricted to submitting one Concept Note as the lead LMIC or U.S. applicant."* It states elsewhere that "either institution may serve as the Prime awardee."

Does this mean that US institutions are limited to one Concept Note as the prime awardee, or as the lead application from the US? For instance, if one Concept Note listed the US HEI as the prime awardee, and another Concept Note listed the LMIC HEI as the prime awardee, would both be eligible for submission, or would this violate the limit of one per institution?

USAID Response: *A U.S (or LMIC) HEI can serve as the Prime Applicant on one Concept Note. In your example, both the U.S. and LMIC would technically be eligible for submission. With that in mind, USAID expects that Concept Notes identify the appropriate institution to serve as the Prime Applicant.*

8. From the website, I came to know that HEI both in US and LMIC can apply for the grant and HEI include public or private universities, colleges, research institutes, and training institutes [including teacher training institutes]. We are a not-for-profit and non-governmental research institute from Nepal.

I just wanted to make sure we are eligible. What exactly are you looking for in case of research institutes to be eligible?

USAID Response: *For purposes of this Addendum, higher education institution is defined as follows, consistent with guidance provided by USAID's Education framework: "A tertiary education institution is an organization that provides educational opportunities that build on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields...Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education. This may include public or private universities, colleges, research institutes, training institutes [including teacher training institutes], etc." Because this*

funding opportunity is restricted to higher education institutions, only those international or independent research institutions that offer, or are officially associated with, a recognized educational or training program (not inclusive of informal extension services) will be considered as "higher education institutions".

While non-HEIs cannot serve as the Prime Applicant under this Addendum, they can be part of a consortium of partners, with the requirement that the Prime Applicant be a U.S. or LMIC HEI.

9. J''aimerai avoir des information Addendum published under the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (STIP) Annual Program Statement (APS).

Par exemple si, ma note conceptuelle est acceptée, je serai financé pour mener mes recherches ici au Sénégal dans mon pays, ou-bien je vais venir là-bas au USA pour y faire mes rechrches en fonction du projet décrit dans la note conceptuelle.

(Google translation: I would like to have some information about the published Addendum under the Science Information Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (STIP) Annual Program Statement (APS).

For example, if my concept note is accepted, I will be funded to conduct my research here in Senegal in my country, or I will come there in USA in order to perform my research according to the project described in the concept note.)

USAID Response: *As noted on page 2 of the Addendum, "USAID/LAB is seeking to support innovative and catalytic partnerships between whole departments, universities, or consortia of academic institutions in LMICs and in the U.S. These institutional partnerships should go beyond traditional "capacity building" such as training, construction or equipment purchases and faculty/student exchange models, to accelerate sustainable human and institutional capacity within LMIC institutions".*

10. I'd like to explain my concept very briefly and then I ask you a few questions to clarify if my concept qualifies. My concept is to integrate past and current efforts on transportation safety (both academic teaching and research) with collaborations with Nepal's Tribhuvan University and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia to improve the coverage on safe highway design, traffic management control and traffic safety analysis in the engineering curricula. In 2016, my department along with partner university departments from the states of Alaska, Idaho and Washington obtained a five year, $5 million project from the US Dept. of Transportation for a Transportation Center focused on Transportation Safety Equity for rural, isolated, tribal and indigenous areas. (CSET, http://cset.uaf.edu/).

(a) Based on my review of the materials relevant to this call, Nepal qualifies as a low-income country. Malaysia however, is upper middle income. Is this a disqualifying property?

USAID Response: *For the purposes of this funding opportunity, USAID defines LMIC as low- and middle-income country. Applicants are referred to the definition and list established by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which can be found here. Based on this list, Malaysia is not a LMIC and, as a result, would not be an eligible country for this Addendum.*

(b) Is my concept compatible with this USAID call?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's response to question #4 above. USAID cannot respond to specific ideas or concepts prior to receipt of an official Concept Note submitted through the designated intake portal.*

11. I would like to know if the collaboration has to be with US University or it can also be with a US-NGO but working in Kenya? And also I would like clarification if two universities in Kenya (private and public) can collaborate for this concept note and for the project?

USAID Response: *As stated under the eligibility criteria: Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC) with an affiliated USAID Mission; either institution may serve as the Prime awardee.*

12. I have not yet found a specific list or criteria defining what countries are/are not LMIC … can you help? Thanks

USAID Response:
For the purposes of this funding opportunity, USAID defines LMIC as low- and middle-income country. Applicants are referred to the definition and list established by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which can be found here.

13. The announcement notes that higher education institutions are allowed only one concept paper. I have learned of interest by a faculty member on our main campus but also a faculty member at one of our regional campuses - Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW).

I'm wondering if you would consider the organizations to be the same or different for purposes of this application. The campuses have different locations within the state of Indiana, with the regional campus having its own chancellor, and granting its own degrees.

Could you please verify if each campus is allowed to submit separate applications without violating the limit on concept papers?

USAID Response: *As per our eligibility requirements: all HEIs are restricted to submitting one Concept Note as the lead LMIC or U.S. applicant. If more than one application is received with the same lead LMIC or US HEI, or that has the same proposed project director, USAID will seek written clarification from the relevant office(s) of sponsored programs regarding which Concept Note should be considered for review. If clarification is not resolved within 2 business days, both applications will be deemed ineligible. Alternatively, a signed letter from an authorizing official within the university's office of sponsored programing can be submitted with Concept Notes by the submission date to clarify and verify that the applicant has the sole official support from the university.*

USAID recommends all US institutions submit a signed letter from an authorizing official stating they certify these institutions as eligible and separate.

14. The program description suggests that the host country (in our case Bhutan) should have LMIC with USAID linkages. I do not think Bhutan has USAID linkages.

(a) Does Bhutan qualify for this type of partnership?

USAID Response: *Because Bhutan does not have a USAID presence, it is not eligible to apply as a Prime Applicant or be a partner HEI (receiving capacity building support) under this Addendum.*

(b) Also, where do I get submission instructions for concept papers?

USAID Response: *Please refer to page 4 of the Addendum (Section V. Application) for instructions on how to submit Concept Notes.*

15. One of Embassy Quito's contacts, the country's best private university - is interested in submitting a concept paper for this initiative. However, they are unsure if they are eligible because Ecuador does not have a USAID office. Would support from the USAID regional office in Lima plus Embassy Quito backing suffice? Please advise.

USAID Response: *Ecuador is eligible, as USAID has programming in the health, environment, and democracy and governance sectors and successfully oversees it through direct contact with implementing and local Ecuadorian partners, regular site visits, and Embassy Quito's assistance. USAID's DC-based oversight has never encountered problems related to being off-site and believes that can continue to be the case with educational programming.*

16. I have gone through the eligibility guidelines and country strategic intervention areas of USAID for Uganda. All these documents seem to confirm that my University can collaborate with an HEI in the US to advance the cause of developing Horticulture at both under- and postgraduate level as well as engaging with community to further the perceived emerging training needs we are currently not equipped to handle both by HR and infrastructure. Intervention at policy will also create the environment to foster development of marginalized fields.

(a) One of the supporting documents discourages inclusion of infrastructural support, which is key towards achieving the other needs. Can I still include this in the concept?

USAID Response: *With this funding announcement, USAID/ Lab is interested in supporting institutional partnerships that "go beyond traditional 'capacity building' such as training, construction or equipment purchases and faculty/student exchange models, to accelerate sustainable human and institutional capacity within LMIC institutions". Please also see USAID's response to Technical/ Clarifying question #4 above.*

(b) As my University is in Uganda, can I continue to work with the USAID local office in Uganda to develop the concept?

USAID Response: *If already doing so, please continue to work with the USAID/Uganda Mission.*

17. The main body of the Concept Note (section I and II, ALP, No. 7200AA18APS00003) must be double-spaced and must use 12pt Times New Roman font. What about section III?

USAID Response: *Section III should also be double-spaced and written using 12 point Times New Roman font.*

18. My question is what countries are considered to be LMIC?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's response to Technical/Clarifying Question #12.*

19. Is there a limit of submissions from an institution?

USAID Response: *As noted on page 4 of the Addendum, "Because USAID seeks to increase the capacity of part or all of the LMIC HEI, while leveraging an all of-university approach from the US-based HEI; all HEIs are restricted to submitting one Concept Note as the lead LMIC or U.S. applicant.*

If more than one application is received with the same lead LMIC or US HEI, or that has the same proposed project director, USAID will seek written clarification from the relevant office(s) of sponsored programs regarding which Concept Note should be considered for review. If clarification is not resolved within 2 business days, both applications will be deemed ineligible. Alternatively, a signed letter from an authorizing official within the university's office of sponsored programing can be submitted with Concept Notes by the submission date to clarify and verify that the applicant has the sole official support from the university. The verified concept note will be accepted for evaluation and all other concept notes submitted by that HEI will be deemed ineligible for non-compliance with the conditions of this Addendum. They will be notified accordingly via email.

Please note, HEIs can serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple applications".

20. In USAID's vision for the addendum, what would be characterized as a reasonable amount of collaborative partners for the project?

USAID Response: *Concept Notes submitted to the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum to the STIP APS will be evaluated on the extent to which the proposed project "proposes appropriate and effective collaborations with local communities and/or other partners (i.e. outside of the Prime U.S. and LMIC HEIs)." For the purposes of this Addendum, USAID does not require a minimum number of collaborators or level of collaborator involvement. Rather, USAID is interested in supporting appropriate and strategic partnerships that will accelerate impact.*

21. Format: the Addendum Template states the concept note cannot be more than 5 pages DOUBLE SPACED and Times 12 point font. Is it the intent for USAID to receive concept notes that are formatted to double spacing, essentially resulting in only 22 lines per page? There appears to be quite a lot of content that will need to be put in that space, and perhaps the line spacing can be reconsidered?

USAID Response: *The goal of the Concept Note format is to provide a brief overview of project objectives and rationale, with more detailed work plans to be developed later in the application*

process, if an applicant is chosen to move forward. Please note that Concept Notes that do not adhere to the required format will not be considered.

22. The addendum states that USAID prefers the PI for the project be from the LMIC HEI. Does this consideration reflect the needed access to technology, logistics and other resources the PI will need to perform these duties? Our partner LMIC HEI is not able to serve as a PI for these reasons. Will USAID be able to take this consideration into account when considering preferences for PI?

USAID Response: *As noted in the Eligibility section of the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum (Section III), eligibility is "restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC) with an affiliated USAID Mission; either institution may serve as the Prime awardee". USAID leaves it to Applicants to identify the most appropriate Prime for the partnership, and to provide sufficient rationale for the proposed structure.*

23. The call specifies that the program is for "higher education institutions (HEIs) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) that have a USAID presence." I wonder you can help to clarify that the South Africa is definitely qualified based on this definition. Any insights are greatly appreciated.

USAID Response: *USAID does currently give bilateral assistance and has a Mission in South Africa.*

24. Kindly clarify what "double-spaced" and "1 inch margin" mean with respect to the concept note instructions for the STIP APS. We're wondering if it is double line spacing and where does the 1 inch margin apply? Kindly clarify.

USAID Response: *Yes, "double-spaced" refers to double line spacing for the text of the concept note and "1 inch margin" is an indication of the top and side margins that should be set for each page of the concept note document. Please note that Concept Notes that do not adhere to the requested format will not be considered.*

25. Could you please let me know where I could find the Concept Note template (Appendix 1)? I could not find it on www.grants.gov .

USAID Response: *The Concept Note template can be found by clicking the "Related Documents" tab - the template is the last file at the bottom of the page.*

26. Should the Concept Note be submitted by a partner institution in a LMIC or is it also allowed for a U.S. institutions to submit the Concept Note?

USAID Response: *As noted on page 3 of the Addendum - "Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC) with an affiliated USAID Mission;* ***either institution may serve as the Prime awardee".*** *Please also refer to USAID's response to Technical/Clarifying question #22, above.*

27. I attended the Water and Health conference at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In one of the Panel Discussions held, absence of profession that is bridging engineering and public health was one of the main gaps. We also have noticed this as a main gap and we were on the process of drafting curriculum and research agenda on Public Health Engineering, a one year master program. Currently we are looking for partners in US universities. We are also looking for funds. Therefore, could you please kindly tip me if we could apply a proposal for supporting a training and research on Public Health Engineering?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's response to Technical/Clarifying Question #9.*

28. I would like to apply through University of California, San Diego and a Mexican public university to develop a project to improve the research publication in relation to mental health and human rights. I see that both health and human rights are priorities in the programs that USAID has in Mexico but I would like to double check that Mexico is eligible for this grant.

USAID Response: *Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between a U.S. HEI and an HEI in a low or middle income country (LMIC) in which USAID works. Based on the definition and list of LMIC countries established by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which can be found here, Mexico is not classified as a low or middle income country, and is thus not eligible for this Addendum.*

29. What is the expected start date for the project? The concept note requires proposers to list a start date, but the review process, co-creation, and full proposal preparation timeline are not noted in the solicitation.

USAID Response: *Based the steps involved in the co-creation and selection process, a project selected for the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum would not begin before August 2018.*

30. Does USAID require applicants to name personnel during the concept note stage?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical / Clarifying question #31.*

31. Are any personnel positions required by USAID?

USAID Response: *Applicants are invited to propose personnel they believe will be necessary and sufficient to achieve the objectives proposed in their Concept Notes. USAID will evaluate the "extent to which the proposed personnel (from U.S. and LMIC partners) have the skills and resources necessary for successful implementation of the proposed activities".*

32. Will USAID allow font be smaller than size 12 point and different style than Times New Roman for charts, tables, graphics, figures, textboxes, and other graphics?

USAID Response: *USAID will allow smaller font for charts, tables, graphics, figures, textboxes, and other graphics - please do not reduce to size smaller than size 8. Please use Times New Roman for all text.*

33. Will USAID allow the line spacing be single spaced for charts, tables, graphics, figures, textboxes, and other graphics?

USAID Response: *Yes, USAID will allow for line spacing to be single-spaced for charts, tables, graphics, figures, textboxes, and other graphics.*

34. Should section III.B in the STIP APS addendum, Contact Information for Proposed Partners, be submitted as a separate excel spreadsheet or is a word document or PDF spreadsheet allowable for submission?

USAID Response: *Contact information can be provided in any clear format, provided it fits, together with part A, within the two page limit for Section III.*

35. It is written "applicants should ensure that proposals are in line with associated USAID Mission Region or Country Development Cooperation Strategy". So, we would like to know if Madagascar is eligible?

USAID Response: *USAID has a working presence in Madagascar and it is thus eligible for the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum under the STIP APS. It is up to the applicant to ensure that the proposed scope of work is in line with the associated Mission's Region or Country Development Cooperation Strategy, which can be found here.*

36. Is construction of building eligible?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical/Clarifying Question #9.*

37. Is collaboration between 2 colleges (each is part of a University) possible?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to Technical/ Clarifying questions #6, #20, and #56.*

38. I would like to seek clarification if it is acceptable for Strathmore University to submit multiple concept notes with different partners from different faculty in our institution.

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's response to Technical/Clarifying Question #13.*

39. Our global health program is excited to prepare a concept note for USAID review as part of APS No: 7200AA18APS00003 Call for Concept Notes. The eligibility criteria notes that eligible HEIs include those "that provide educational opportunities that build on secondary education, provide learning activities in specialized fields, including … research institutes." Given that the XXXX regularly hosts post-doctoral fellows, provides training experiences and internships for domestic and international students, and contributes to capacity building learning activities in specialized fields I believe that we would qualify as an HEI under this definition. I wanted to reach out to confirm that this is a correct interpretation of the USAID definition of US-Based HEIs. We will be happy to provide information on this in the concept note/proposal as needed.

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to technical/ clarifying question #6, #8, and #16. It is up to the Applicant to determine status as an HEI and to provide sufficient supporting information within the Concept Note for USAID to recognize HEI status.*

40. While Gabon does not have its own USAID mission in-country, I understand that it would be considered to have an affiliated mission in the Central Africa Regional office. Is that correct? Can you confirm whether Gabon is eligible for this opportunity?

USAID Response: *Gabon does not have a bilateral Mission and does not qualify for this specific Addendum.*

41. I see that proposals should be in alignment with Region or Country Development Cooperative Strategy, but to what extent might it be acceptable for a concept letter to mainly align with the overall strategies of the Bureau for Africa Office of Sustainable Development?

USAID Response: *As noted on page 6 of the Addendum, USAID will evaluate the "extent to which the proposed partnerships, projects, or activities align with the corresponding USAID Mission's Country Development Cooperation Strategy and other collaborating Bureau or Independent Office missions and strategic objectives, where applicable. It would be acceptable for a Concept Note to align with the development objectives/strategic framework of any USAID Missions, Bureaus, and Independent Offices (both overseas and at USAID Headquarters).*

42. I am an Associate Professor at XXX University and would like to partner XXXX University on a capacity building project surrounding data science. I was wondering if you would have a few minutes to talk over the phone to discuss the basic concept and I can get a sense of whether that would be aligned with the goals of the program.

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical/Clarifying Question #4.*

43. I have been granted admission to study PhD on conservation science in the University of Arizona. Can I get any grants from USAID in this regard? Please let me know. I see one information on internet regarding 7200AA18APS00003-*ADDENDUM-ALP Accelerating Local Potential Addendum to the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships in Higher Education Program Annual Program Statement* and could not understand and contacted you for more clarification.

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical/Clarifying Question #9.*

44. Can a non-HEI or LMIC Board Member also provide services under the project (for example, by developing countermeasures to cyber-attacks)?

USAID Response: *Please refer to USAID's responses to technical/ clarifying questions #4 and #6.*

45. Can the following forms of co-operation between the US HEI and the LMIC partner be supported by this program?

- **Exchange of scientists for lectures, trainings and master classes.**
- **Internship of scientists of the LMIC University at the US HEI.**
- **Joint research on the basis of two universities. Purchase of materials and equipment for research.**
- **Publications of monographs and articles as the results of the work.**
- **Preparation of masters on the program of double diplomas on the basis of the two universities.**
- **Generation and commercialization of joint Intellectual Property created in the course of this program.**

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Technical/Clarifying Questions #4 and #9.*

46. On page 3 of the addendum, USAID notes "These institutional partnerships should go beyond traditional "capacity building" such as training, construction or equipment purchases and faculty/student exchange models, to accelerate sustainable human and institutional capacity within LMIC institutions. Can USAID confirm that it would not be opposed to some inclusion of these traditional capacity strengthening actions provided that they are not the sole or primary focus of a Proposal?

USAID Response: *When appropriate and necessary, traditional capacity strengthening activities can be included in the proposed concept, but approaches that go beyond traditional institutional capacity building will be viewed more favorably. Please also see USAID's response to Technical/ Clarifying questions #4 and #16.*

47. On page 3 of the addendum notes that eligibility is limited to "partnerships between one or more HEI in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a LMIC with an affiliated USAID Mission." Can USAID confirm that an application should focus on one or more institutions in only one country rather than convening institutions from across multiple countries? Also, should applicants engage with respective USAID Missions at the concept note stage?

USAID Response: *Consortia approaches are acceptable under this addendum as long as the approach is feasible within the given time frame and budget range. Please also see USAID's responses to Technical/ Clarifying questions #6 and #56. Applicants are encouraged to engage with USAID Missions as appropriate and feasible.*

48. Page 4 of the addendum mentions that "USAID/LAB strongly encourages Concept Notes be authored and submitted by the LMIC partner"; however page 3 of the addendum states that "either institution may serve as the Prime awardee". Can USAID confirm that even if the LMIC partner submits the Concept Note, it would be supportive of the U.S.-based institution serving as the Prime at the full proposal stage?

USAID Response: *Yes. Please also refer to USAID's response to Technical/ Clarifying question #51.*

49. This solicitation was released on March 5th and is due on April 6th. Considering geographic time differences, variation in institutional capacity, and the need for substantial cross-institution communication, this five week solicitation-to-proposal turnaround might not provide sufficient time for meaningful collaboration between US HEIs and LMIC HEIs. To promote submission of the highest quality concept notes, would USAID consider extending the deadline several weeks?

USAID Response: *In order to proceed to the co-creation stage and select a Prime awardee by the planned deadline, the application deadline will remain April 6th. Applicants are reminded that the goal of the 5-page Concept Note format is to provide a brief overview of project objectives and rationale. More detailed work plans will be developed later in the application process, if an applicant is chosen to move forward.*

50. This solicitation is institutionally limited to one concept note from a prime bidding institution. Related to the previous question, the five week solicitation-to-proposal turnaround might not allow sufficient time for universities to conduct their internal limited submission review and selection process. To promote submission of the highest quality concept notes, would USAID consider extending the deadline several weeks?

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Technical / Clarifying Question # 49.*

51. On page 3, the solicitation states that "Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the U.S. and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC) with an affiliated USAID Mission; either institution may serve as the Prime awardee." Later on page 3 the solicitation again notes that "either institution may serve as the Prime awardee." Page #4 of the solicitation, however, states that "USAID/LAB strongly encourages Concept Notes be authored and submitted by the LMIC partner." Given that the Prime institution in a partnership submits a proposal, does the above statement from page 4 constitute a USAID/LAB preference for LMIC HEIs as the Prime bidding institutions, as opposed to US HEIs? Will the location of the Prime HEI be considered in evaluating these concept notes?

USAID Response: *The location of the Prime HEI is not an official evaluation criterion; however, the extent to which the approach represents the articulated needs of the LMIC HEI will be assessed. Applicants should keep in mind that USAID is interested in funding projects under the Addendum that are demand-driven.*

52. Although USAID closed its field office in Ecuador in 2016, the agency continues support to the country. As such, are interested HEIs in Ecuador considered eligible to apply?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical/Clarifying Question #15.*

53. Are local actors from Ecuador considered eligible as part of a proposed consortium/partnership?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to Technical/Clarifying Questions #6, #15, and #20.*

54. Evaluation criterion #1 requires Concept Note alignment with USAID Mission Country Development Cooperation Strategies. What are applicants to do if only an outdated Country Development Cooperation Strategy is in place?

USAID Response: *Concept Notes will be evaluated first and foremost based on their approach to accelerating local STIP potential of LMIC HEIs. Please refer to evaluation guidelines. You may also refer to the most recent version of the associated Mission CDCS.*

55. The last paragraph in Section II indicates, "USAID/LAB is soliciting joint Concept Notes from a LMIC HEI and a US HEI…" But the first paragraph of section III (same page) indicates that "Eligibility for this Addendum is restricted to partnerships between one or more higher education institutions (HEI) in the US and one or more HEIs from a low or middle income country (LMIC)…" Please clarify if Concept Notes in response to this addendum should have 1 US HEI and 1 LMIC HEI, or one or more of each.

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to Technical/ Clarifying questions #6 and #56.*

56. On a related note, assuming the "one or more HEIs" interpretation is correct, is there a preferred consortium size or an upper limit on the number of participating HEIs? Will Concept Notes with more participating HEIs be viewed more favorably? Will Concept Notes with more non-HEIs be viewed more favorably?

USAID Response: *Under the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum, USAID is interested in funding the most appropriate and effective partnerships to rapidly accelerate LMIC HEI institutional capacity. USAID recognizes that the appropriate number of partners will vary by project, and it is up the Applicant to provide sufficient rationale for the proposed structure. While consortia applications are welcome, they are not necessary, and all Concept Notes that propose a partnership between at least one U.S. HEI and at least one LMIC HEI are eligible. Please also see USAID's response to Technical/Clarifying Question #20.*

57. Can HEIs from multiple LMICs partner with a U.S. university as part of a consortium?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to Technical/Clarifying Questions #6, #20, and #56.*

58. Besides short-term workshops and specialized scientific training, can funds from this program be used to also support specialized/new academic/semester length courses for training/capacity building?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID responses to questions #4, and #10 part b.*

59. Can efforts at collecting pertinent primary data in the field (i.e., from households impacted by development policies that are being monitored or to be evaluated) be part of the project?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to questions #4, and #10 part b.*

60. Page 1 of the APS states that the program seeks to work with HEIs in "LMICs that have a USAID presence," with a footnoted reference to the USAID where we work page. Could you please confirm that universities from all countries where USAID works are eligible, even if USAID does not have a resident mission in the country (i.e. if USAID activities in the country are managed remotely from a regional USAID Mission)?

USAID Response: *For the purposes of this addendum, USAID will only be evaluating applications from countries with a bilateral Mission presence.*

61. Does USAID have a preference for HEIs from countries where USAID has an in-person presence, or will all HEIs from eligible countries be viewed the same?

USAID Response: *Country geographic location is not a scoring criterion of this addendum. Please also see USAID's response to Technical/ Clarifying question #60.*

62. Does USAID have a mission in Costa Rica, and does in qualify as a Low/Middle Income country for purposes of your new STIP grant program?

USAID Response: *Based on the definition and list established by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, which can be found here, Costa Rica is not a low or middle income country, and is thus not eligible for the Accelerating Local Potential Addendum under the STIP APS.*

63. (a) Would it be reasonable in this program for one US university to collaborate with more than one LMIC university to accelerate their potential to sustainably improve their institutional capacity for science, technology, and innovation?

USAID Response: *Please see USAID's responses to Technical/Clarifying Questions #6, #8, #20, and #56.*

… I have so far a network of 8 sub-Saharan African statistical collaboration laboratories, one in Brazil, and several more that could be created in the next few years in South Asia, Africa, South America, and SE Europe.

(b) Would it be reasonable to partner with say up to 10 HEIs from these countries for this Accelerating Local Potential program?

USAID Response:
Please see USAID's responses to Technical/Clarifying Questions #6, #8, #20, and #56. Please also consider USAID's response to Cost Proposal question #1.

BUDGET AND COST QUESTIONS:

1. What is the overall funding level anticipated for the program?

USAID Response: *As noted on page 6 of the Addendum, "Contingent on the availability of funding, USAID/LAB anticipates supporting up to six new Cooperative Agreements of approximately $0.5-$1 million total for each partnership, spent over two to three years. USAID reserves the right to award more or fewer awards than this estimate and is not obligated to make any awards".*

2. What are the maximum and average amounts of anticipated awards under this program?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Cost Proposal Question 1.*

3. Section III, Subsection A states to include a proposed budget and a summary budget narrative for the justification of expenses. At this first round of the application process, is the evaluation team looking for a full detailed budget describing each line item for each partner; or is this more of a rough order of magnitude that each partner plans to expend for the duration of the project? Since there will be a later phase of inviting selected institutions to submit a full application, my assumption would be that the full detailed budget would be needed at that time.

USAID Response: *For the Concept Note phase, the evaluation team is not looking for a detailed budget; as you've correctly assumed, that level of detail will be asked of Applicants eventually*

selected to submit a Full Application. At this time, USAID is looking for a high-level overview of expenditures for each partner/activity proposed in the Concept Note.

4. I am curious about the budget split among the involved institutions and if there are any recommended guidelines or desired splits. Is there a link for developing the budget?

USAID Response: *USAID does not have a preferred budget template for Section III.A of the STIP APS Addendum. USAID does hope, through this call, to "accelerate local potential" so therefore USAID would expect to see that a reasonable and significant portion of proposed budgets are allocated towards supporting local partners included in the application.*

5. In looking through the grants notice for FOA 7200AA18APS0003-ADDENDUM-ALP, I was unable to find any information on Indirect Cost recovery rates, whether there are any restrictions and whether IDC is included in the $500K - $1M total budget allowed for the proposal.

USAID Response: *The $500K- $1M total budget **does** include allowable recovery of indirect costs, consistent with applicants Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements (NICRAs). If an organization does not have an approved NICRA an organization may apply for a NICRA prior to award or may elect to request the 10% indirect cost de minimus amount for indirect costs, consistent with **2 CFR 200.414 Indirect (F&A) costs.**(f) (Also see the response to Cost Question 18.)*

6. Where I can get information about budget, for example budget distribution between the US member and the LMIC partner.

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Cost Proposal Question #3 and #4.*

7. What is breakdown of foreign institution funding and how will this work – subawards from prime or individual awards?

USAID Response: *It is up to the discretion of each applicant to determine the structure of proposed funding between Prime and proposed subawardees. Please see the response to Cost Proposal Question #3 and #4.*

8. Do you envision a stipulation on the budget regarding the percent of funding allocated to each University? For instance, is the LMIC University to receive a greater portion of the funding than the US HEI?

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Cost Proposal Question #3 and #4.*

9. Can we name an entity as a partner without providing funding for that partner?

USAID Response: *Yes. In-kind partners, thought leadership partners and consortia should all be considered, as appropriate, in your approach.*

10. Is the lead institution allowed to issue a sub award for the partner's costs, or is the budget to be allocated directly by USAID for each partner?

USAID Response: *Yes, the lead institution may propose to issue subawards to cover partner's costs. All proposed subawardees are subject to standard USAID subaward review procedures prior to award (aka, ensuring they are not on the OFAC list, DUNS numbers, ensuring they have active SAMS registrations, etc).*

11. Should the Concept Note include a budget detail?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Cost Proposal Question 3.*

12. The APS Addendum (section III.A) states that a proposed budget and summary budget narrative are required. Does this mean that the budget included should be a summary budget as well or should it be a line item detailed budget?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Cost Proposal Question 3.*

13. Does USAID have a preferred budget template for section III.A of the STIP addendum?

USAID Response: *USAID does not have a preferred budget template for Section III.A of the STIP APS Addendum.*

14. What expenses are eligible to be covered by this program? In particular,

- **Students' stipends in the LMIC and HEI universities;**
- **Faculty incentives at the LMIC university;**
- **Faculty summer salary at the HEI university;**
- **Equipment purchase at both universities;**
- **Advisory board travel and related expenses.**
- **Non-university subcontractor expenses.**

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Cost Proposal Question #3. USAID will evaluate proposals based on the appropriateness of their approach.*

15. What is the recommended and/or allowed financial management plan? Will the lead HEI partner issue a sub agreement to the LMIC partner? Or will there be 2 separate awards be issued to each institution/partner?

USAID Response: *Please see the response to Cost Proposal Questions #3 and #10.*

16. Besides short-term workshops and specialized scientific training, can funds from this program be used to also support specialized/new academic/semester length courses for training/capacity building?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Technical Clarifying Question #4.*

17. Does USAID have a cap on overhead costs, or will it use the agreed Facilities & Administration (F&A) rate with American universities?

USAID Response: *Please see response to Cost Proposal Question #5.*

18. Does USAID have any guidance on overhead rates for LMIC HEIs that do not have federally agreed F&A rates or equivalent?

USAID Response: *Per 2 CFR 200.414 Indirect (F&A) costs. (f), "In addition to the procedures outlined in the appendices in paragraph (e) of this section, any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a* ***de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)*** *which may be used indefinitely. As described in §200.403 Factors affecting allowability of costs, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time."*

[END AMENDMENT 01 OF 7200AA18APS00003-ADDENDUM-ALP]